

# New Book Reveals the 'Human-AI Power Couple' Secret: 2026 Competitive Advantage Isn't AI, It's Employee Engagement

DUBAI, DUBAI, UNITED ARAB EMIRATES, March 5, 2026

[/EINPresswire.com/](https://www.einpresswire.com/) -- In 2026, business leaders face a paralyzing paradox: boards are demanding AI performance while employees are grappling with anxiety over job security. In a landscape where technology is becoming commoditized, a groundbreaking new book argues that the only remaining competitive differentiator is the human element.



Employee Engagement. What Else? by Inge Van Belle

Inge Van Belle's groundbreaking book, *Employee Engagement. What Else?: The Leader's Guide to Customer Happiness and Organisational Success*, reveals why 2026 marks the inflection point where human leadership and artificial intelligence must unite – and why engagement is the key to making that partnership work.

Most business leaders understand that employee engagement matters. They've tried leadership programs, wellness initiatives and team-building exercises. Yet engagement scores remain stubbornly low, silos persist, and frustration grows. Many have begun to believe engagement is intangible and almost impossible to influence.

Van Belle challenges this thinking head-on. Drawing on two decades of experience at the intersection of leadership, technology, and organizational culture, she argues that the future of work isn't human or machine – it's the human powered by the machine.

The organizations that will dominate in 2026 and beyond aren't those with the most advanced AI tools, but those that have built true AI fluency across every level of their workforce while maintaining deep employee engagement.

“We're entering the era of the Human-AI Power Couple,” says Van Belle. “This year, leaders will manage hybrid teams where AI agents work alongside human employees, each with their own

permissions, workflows, and accountability.

This isn't science fiction – it's happening now. And the leaders who can successfully orchestrate these hybrid teams will be exponentially more productive than those who can't."

The book introduces a powerful paradox: the more advanced technology becomes, the more human leadership matters. AI won't replace your people – but disengagement will. Organizations risk losing their most valuable asset not to automation, but to the confusion, anxiety, and disconnection that poorly managed transformation creates.

What sets this book apart is its uncompromising business focus. This is not another HR manual filled with soft skills and feel-good platitudes. Van Belle, whose career spans marketing, business development, executive search, and leadership advisory – but never HR – brings an interdisciplinary approach that combines marketing know-how, tech confidence, and data-driven insights.

She confronts the skills gap holding many organizations back and offers a practical framework for treating employee engagement as a serious business driver. In an unconventional move, Van Belle positions Dubai – not Silicon Valley or traditional business capitals – as the book's central case study.

Having witnessed firsthand how the emirate transformed from a pearl-diving village into a global magnet for talent through strong leadership, clear purpose, and strategic communication, she demonstrates how these same principles apply to building highly engaged organizations anywhere in the world.

"After working with organizations across ten countries and advising C-suite leaders throughout the MENA region, I've seen what truly drives engagement – and what doesn't," Van Belle explains. "The companies that thrive tomorrow aren't investing in AI despite their people.

They're investing in AI because of their people. They understand that becoming an AI-enabled organization requires more than deploying technology. It requires building AI fluency, fostering trust, integrating learning into daily workflows, and maintaining the human factor in every equation."

The book provides business leaders with a clear roadmap for 2026 and beyond, addressing the urgent questions keeping executives awake: How do we close the AI confidence gap? How do we prevent job loss anxiety from paralyzing our workforce?

How do we turn diversity – across generations, cultures, genders, and belief systems – into a competitive strength rather than a communication challenge?

For HR leaders struggling to gain traction at the C-suite level, the book offers compelling,

business-driven arguments to secure investment in people and technology. For communication teams, it reveals fresh strategies to connect internal and external messaging in ways that drive engagement from the inside out.

“There’s a choice HR departments must make,” Van Belle writes, citing a business leader featured in her book. “Reinvent or abolish yourself. In an era where AI is becoming dominant, HR must take the lead in keeping the human factor in the equation. Employee engagement, amplified by technology and driven by a marketing mindset, is the tool to do exactly that.”

Van Belle, co-founder of Herculean Alliance and advisor on economic diplomacy for the Belgian government, was recently named one of the 50 Under 50 for the Middle East and Africa by the Female Founders Institute and UN Women.

Her work has shaped employee experience projects across multiple continents, and she regularly speaks on leadership, engagement, and the future of work.

Employee Engagement. What Else? is published by [Global Book Publishing](#) and is available now on Amazon and through the book's official website. The timing couldn't be more critical. As organizations finalize their 2026 strategies, this book offers the clarity, inspiration, and practical guidance leaders need to turn employee engagement into their most powerful competitive edge.

#### KEY THEMES EXPLORED IN THE BOOK:

- The Human–AI Power Couple: Why the most effective leaders view AI as a partner, not a replacement.
- The AI Confidence Gap: How to build “AI Fluency” across all levels of the organization to prevent disengagement.
- Beyond HR: Why engagement requires an interdisciplinary approach involving Marketing and IT.
- The Dubai Model: Lessons in purpose and innovation from one of the world’s most dynamic cities.

#### BOOK DETAILS

- Title: Employee Engagement. What Else? The Leader’s Guide to Customer Happiness and Organisational Success
- Author: Inge Van Belle
- Genre: Management, Leadership, Organizational Culture
- Publisher: Global Book Publishing, <https://globalbookpublishing.com/>
- Book Link: <https://www.amazon.com/dp/B0DZYKQCNO>

KEYWORDS: employee engagement, AI fluency, future of work, hybrid teams, AI agents, AI-enabled organization, AI augmented leadership, human side of AI, employee engagement in times of AI, organizational culture, employer branding, UAE, Dubai

## ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Inge Van Belle is the co-founder of Herculean Alliance and a seasoned leadership advisor with more than 20 years of experience bridging technology, governance, and culture across Europe and the Middle East. She combines board-level perspective with hands-on operational expertise in corporate technology, executive search, and diplomatic engagement. She is Co-Founder of Herculean Alliance, former Senior Client Partner at Korn Ferry, Vice-Chair of the BeNeLux Business Council in Abu Dhabi, host and moderator for the EU-GCC Dialogue on Economic Diversification, and serves as Advisor on Economic Diplomacy in the UAE for the Belgian Government.

Hashtags: #EmployeeEngagement #WorkplaceCulture #OrganizationalLeadership  
#PeopleFirstBusiness #EngagedTeams

Inge Van Belle

Inge Van Belle

[email us here](#)

Visit us on social media:

[LinkedIn](#)

[Instagram](#)

[Other](#)

---

This press release can be viewed online at: <https://www.einpresswire.com/article/896499969>

EIN Presswire's priority is source transparency. We do not allow opaque clients, and our editors try to be careful about weeding out false and misleading content. As a user, if you see something we have missed, please do bring it to our attention. Your help is welcome. EIN Presswire, Everyone's Internet News Presswire™, tries to define some of the boundaries that are reasonable in today's world. Please see our Editorial Guidelines for more information.

© 1995-2026 Newsmatics Inc. All Right Reserved.